

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Steve King (R-IA) today sent the following letter to President Obama asking him to withdraw his nomination of Dawn Johnsen to head the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel. According to Roll Call, earlier today Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE) predicted that "Dawn Johnsen's controversial nomination to head the Office of Legal Counsel won't come up this year." Read more: http://www.rollcall.com/news/42435-1.html?type=printer_friendly

King's letter follows:

January 20, 2010

President Barack Obama

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

In a March 24, 2009 letter, I, along with 62 of my colleagues, respectfully requested that you withdraw your nomination of Ms. Dawn Johnsen to head the Office of Legal Counsel. To date, we have received no response to our letter. On January 7, 2010, you demonstrated a lack of attention to this issue by nominating Ms. Johnsen again for this position.

Dawn Johnsen's pro-abortion agenda is a stark contrast to your stated intention

to find common ground on the issue of abortion. She has condemned virtually every type of regulation of abortion conceived by a legislature, no matter how mild the regulation or how shocking the practice regulated, as unacceptable. In a Supreme Court amicus brief that she authored, Ms. Johnsen wrote, "While a woman might choose to bear children gladly and voluntarily, statutes that curtail her abortion choice are disturbingly suggestive of involuntary servitude, prohibited by the Thirteenth Amendment, in that forced pregnancy requires a woman to provide continuous physical service to the fetus in order to further the state's asserted interest." Ms. Johnsen also included that "abortion restrictions 'reduce pregnant women to no more than fetal container.'"

Ms. Johnsen's record demonstrates that she is incapable of placing the Rule of Law above her political philosophy or personal agenda. The Office of Legal Counsel needs a leader that will respect the Constitution and resist the temptation to substitute personal ideology for sound legal reasoning.

I respectfully request that you withdraw Dawn Johnsen's nomination to head the Office of Legal Counsel. I have enclosed a copy of the March 24, 2009 letter for your convenience. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Steve King
Member of Congress